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# IT FOR THE FUTURE



BY

**E. A. BURROUGHS**

Author of "The Eternal Goad," "A Faith for  
the Firing Line," etc.

WITH A FOREWORD BY THE  
**ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY**

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# THE FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

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BY

E. A. BURROUGHS, M.A.

FELLOW AND TUTOR OF HERTFORD COLLEGE, OXFORD

AUTHOR OF

"THE ETERNAL GOAL," "A FAITH FOR THE FIRING LINE." ETC.

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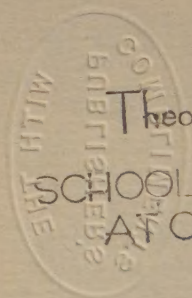
I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.  
*William Blake.*

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*First published in 1916*



TO ALL  
IN THIS DAY OF DARKNESS  
WHO, WITH WHATEVER WEAPONS,  
ARE FIGHTING  
OR HAVE FOUGHT  
FOR THE FUTURE AND  
GOD



## PREFACE

THE contents of this little volume were, for the most part, not originally designed for it, nor indeed for publication at all; though some of the chapters have (not necessarily quite in their present form) already been printed in one way or another. In nearly every case, the thoughts were originally put together to be spoken, and that to very various audiences. It seemed hardly worth while to reduce all of them, by complete revision, to the dead level of essays; and perhaps the slight variation of "atmosphere" from (say) that of a Mass Meeting to that of a College Chapel may help to avert monotony. Nor did it seem necessary to remove all traces of repetition, which are natural in a series of utterances on similar topics to different audiences in the same few months. Ideas and (occasionally) phrases which recur are generally of the nature of "motifs," and in a book whose whole aim is practical some such emphasis on them is almost imperative. The sequence of the

chapters is naturally not very rigid, but I think it is real: the Introduction to some extent touches beforehand all the principal themes.

For kind permission to reprint Chapters V and VI from the *Guardian* and Chapter VII from the *Churchman* I have to thank the Editors of those papers.

In one sense "The Fight for the Future" is a sequel to "A Faith for the Firing Line," as the "Postscript" to the Second Edition of the latter indicates. But the reader whom I had in view in the earlier book was the officer on Active Service—especially as I had known him at Oxford: the present volume is primarily, though not only, an appeal to people at home. One is glad to know that "people at home" have also found use for "A Faith for the Firing Line": it will be an even greater pleasure if "The Fight for the Future" should likewise make friends among people in khaki. It will, at any rate, not require much penetration to see how much of the writer's heart is in khaki, although his own garb has had to remain black.

E. A. B.

OXFORD,  
February 1 1916.

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# FOREWORD

BY THE  
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

*Mr. Burroughs has by his letters and articles on the war obtained so firm a hold on the attention of us all that any further words of his, driving home the spiritual lessons of these tremendous months in our history, will be welcomed by thousands of readers. I commend his book to the consideration of the men and women—and they are many—who are seeking for guidance in thought and action among large and solemn responsibilities.*

RANDALL CANTUAR.

LAMBETH PALACE,  
*January 17, 1916.*



# THE FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

## INTRODUCTION

### “UTOPIA OR HELL?”<sup>1</sup>

THE British nation, with all its merits, has a most unfortunate aptitude for falling between two stools. The cause is our national unwillingness (rather than incapacity) to look far enough ahead or afield: which in turn is part of our national unwillingness to *think*. Whether in military and diplomatic matters abroad, or in economic questions at home, we have seemingly preferred to judge by facts immediately in front of or around us, and revise our plans—at a price—when new facts come into view and put them out. Opportunism, the philo-

<sup>1</sup> Based on an address at the Annual Conference of the Church of England Men's Society, at the Church House, Westminster, in October 1915.

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sophy of the narrow outlook, has been indeed our curse. We have been forced at last to pay for the luxury of being half-educated, and of living, intellectually and morally, from hand to mouth.

In the past, it is true, we have shown an extraordinary power of recovering from and living down our mistakes—the peculiarly British power of “muddling through.” And probably at the heart of many there lurks the false hope that history will repeat itself. If history ever repeats itself, it cannot be expected to do so to-day; for all the conditions are quite without parallel, and on a scale undreamed of before. The mistakes, like everything else, have been vaster, and the price of making them proportionately higher. It is too early even to say that they are not, in themselves, enough to be fatal. At any rate, to assume that they are remediable is the likeliest way to leave them unremedied. In view of our own past, the very first thing necessary is, in Mr. Lloyd George’s words, to “cast aside the fond pretence that you can win victory by an elaborate pretence that you are doing so.” In a war like the present even the winners stand to lose far more than they gain; and for both sides peace is likely to bring a time of testing even more acute than



the war itself. We shall do better to learn from the past than to trust to the future.

The present purpose, however, of these wider criticisms is not political: it is not the political but the spiritual outlook which this little book has in view. Its object is to appeal for more far-sightedness in the spiritual sphere than has been shown in the region of politics. Here, at least, let us act as those who have learned to look around and ahead. Two wars are being waged round about us—the fight for the present and the fight for the future. The latter will go on, it may be, for years after the war with the Central Powers is over: its consequences, for all the nations, will be even more vital and far-reaching. If we are not careful, we shall carry into the conduct of the spiritual war that lack of foresight and narrowness of view which have so fatally hampered us in the fight with Germany. And the cost of not having learned our lesson will be even greater than that of the lesson itself.

We speak not uncommonly of standing on the threshold of a new world—of a new world to arise from the ruins of the old. It is well to remind ourselves continually that a new world does not necessarily mean

a better world. A new world there will certainly be. The unchained elemental forces are seeing to that. Whether it will be a worse world or a better for their activity must depend on the extent to which higher forces counteract them. Left to its own natural development, the play of destructive and mutually antagonistic forces can only lead to more destruction and deeper antagonisms.

And if, indeed, there be no higher forces than those embodied in nature and in the natural man, there is nothing else ahead to hope for. Some of us, however, believe that above man there is God, and, moreover, that in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, there is a link between us and Him, and provision for our ascent to His level. And so we believe in the possibility of a better world, of good emerging out of evil. But by all the laws and experiences of the higher life in the individual, we know that this better world will not come of itself. *It will have to be fought for.* The kind of world that emerges after the war will depend on the extent to which God comes in to over-rule the evil; and that, in turn, on the extent to which our faith releases His power. It is to the faith which, at whatever cost, will co-operate with God in bringing good out of

evil that the higher patriotism, which is Religion, calls every lover of his land to-day. And a call to faith is a call to battle.

Many things are wonderfully in our favour. There has never been a better opportunity for cleaning slates and beginning over again. The world has at last discovered its own insufficiency: at last we can count on a fairly general, though still inarticulate, sense of sin—at least in its root-sense of mistake and failure. Men whom, in the old days, nothing could dissuade from sowing the wind, have been brought to themselves by reaping the whirlwind. And when a man has been brought to himself, it only needs a little faith and wisdom and love to bring him on to God as the goal of his being.

Then again, God Himself has been revealed and vindicated to an extent which almost constitutes a new revelation. It is only the very shallowest thinking that sees in the war a disproof of God. If anything has been exploded, it is *man*. In proportion as things were man-made they have gone to pieces under the strain; among them that man-made compromise between the Church and the world which has too long been taken for the Christian religion. But in the midst of the ruins God has been revealing Himself. He is now a reality to thousands to whom,

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two years ago, He was a clause in the Creed. And Christianity, as Jesus Christ taught it, has been vindicated up to the hilt in a number of ways. For instance, we are at last learning that His law of life—the law of the Cross—is the natural and not the unnatural one; that it *is* more blessed to give than to receive; and that he who loses his life *does* somehow find it, becoming twice the man he was.

And, following from this, we have been realizing the undreamed-of resources and splendour of even ordinary human nature, when touched by sacrifice into fire. We have seen things achieved which formerly we should not have thought of attempting. And so we have discovered, too, our own past mistake—the common mistake of the majority of modern Christians—that of asking of men, in Christ's Name, not too much but too little.

In such ways as these we start with a great advantage. But still the prospect is double-headed. There are also new and terrible forces against us. It is a case, as some one has put it, of "Utopia or Hell"; and, by all merely material calculations, the odds would seem to be in favour of Hell.

Think in passing of just a few of the problems ahead—problems which will be

equally pressing whether we win or lose the war.

First of all, for very many of us, except in so far as we believe in God, the light will have faded out of the sky, and the briskness have gone from the air we breathe. What of life remains will be a fag-end, to be used up anyhow; by some in the fruitless and paralysing remembrance of the past, by others in a vicious effort to forget it. There will be no motive for "living dangerously," as Nietzsche bids us, in one of those phrases in which he so nearly approaches the mind of the Christ he misunderstood. Except in so far as men believe in God, they will in many cases have lost all the old motives for being their best selves. The sons they were wrapped up in they will see no more; the money they toiled for has largely vanished; and, having discovered how little money can do to ease the heart, they cannot hypnotize themselves into its service again.

Again, the men who should have been leaders in the coming days will largely have been left in their soldier's graves. Others will have returned as physical wreckage; others, again, as what might be called intellectual wreckage, where the strong, keen, inquiring mind has been switched suddenly off from its proper path at a critical stage to



a life which, though formative of will, is generally admitted to be hostile to thinking and destructive of soul. "Months of boredom punctuated by moments of terror": such is a description of life in the Navy which a naval lieutenant quotes as exactly fitting the facts. And one could quote many letters giving a similar impression of life in the Army, as it affects the type of man I have in mind, though here the ingredients are apt to be mingled in very different proportions, and the "moments of terror" may be stretched into weeks. These are not the conditions that make for intellectual greatness in after days. Between the inroads of death, disablement, and interruption of growth we shall certainly be left with a shortage of leadership in days when leaders will be more needed than ever—unless, that is, we believe in Divine resources from which to make good our loss.

Once more, the old problems will all be there, still unsolved and (again unless the Divine factor comes in) a hundred times more insoluble than ever; and new problems will have sprung up on every side. Think, for instance, of one—the problem of relief for sufferers through the war. That will be a tax which will keep us poor for many years after the patriotic motive has ceased

to make poverty tolerable. Now every one readily subscribes to relief funds, and pays his war-taxes with relative cheerfulness. But will it be so ten years hence—unless a new and more permanent motive supervenes to perpetuate the spirit of sacrifice? It is but too likely from what has happened before, and is the theme of many proverbs, that we should forget our obligations when we have secured our aims. But what a disgrace and defeat it would mean to us!

Yet again, among the new problems will be some of great urgency which will raise the whole question of morality and religion. For instance, the shortage of population will certainly call for remedial measures. What lines will these follow? The easy line, which has so much to recommend it to the human animal—State relaxation of the marriage law—or the difficult line, which legislation alone can never make effectual, because it depends on a Christian conscience in the community? There is no question but the shortage *could* be made up by universal willingness to bring up large families, though in simpler ways; by a universal belief that “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he hath”; by a universal sense of responsibility to God for the use of money; and by the rescue,

which would then be made possible, of the large amount of child-life which is at present annually thrown away. But all this is hard, because it is Christian. Germany thought it would be hard to invade France from the east; and so the treaty about Belgium became "a scrap of paper." If one may judge from the moral opportunism of our social legislation in the past, we are almost certain after the war to have attempts to treat the Divine law of marriage as "a scrap of paper" also. And here will be one of the great battlefields of faith.

So one might go on adding to the elements in the prospect before us which make it dark indeed, if we can only reckon upon the action of material forces and laws. But the religious man, whatever he may call his religion, is one who believes that all merely material calculations are wrong calculations, because they leave out the crucial Factor—God Himself. For such, the war is one vast condemnation of materialism in all its forms and all its habitats—of the commercial materialism of England quite as much as of the militarist materialism of Germany. He believes, further, that it has thrown into a new prominence that rival set of principles by which God, Who is Spirit, means spiritual beings to order their life.

Our very surroundings—the chaos of material suffering and loss and death which the world has become as it were in a night—compel us to believe, if we would even keep our reason, that “the things which are seen are but for a time, but the things which are unseen are eternal.” We are beginning at last to *live* on the fact that “our citizenship is in heaven.”

Well, then, “if we *live* by spirit, by spirit let us also *walk*”; relentlessly spiritualizing the *whole* of our life, down to the smallest details. So only shall we be able to redeem the past, to bear the present, and to shape the future; for it is nothing less that the Christians of to-day are called to do. The world’s plans and principles have been tried and found wanting; ours, as Mr. G. K. Chesterton puts it, have in the past been “found difficult and not tried.” Now there is a supreme opportunity for applying them; for the world has none to offer instead, except the ones which have led to the crash. The age of science is spiritually bankrupt, and will soon be financially bankrupt also. It is for us to bring in a new age of faith and miracle instead.

Have we the faith to go and begin it? For it is according to our faith that it shall be unto us. Only, the faith that is

going to turn the scale for Utopia and against Hell will be the very reverse of that passive acquiescence which so often poses as Christian faith. Faith may much more properly be regarded as the highest of high explosives—a thing which is only really itself when removing a mountain. What every man of us has got to do, if we would save the future for and with God, is, with prayer and thought, to choose his mountain—there are always lots of them about—lay himself up against it, and proceed to explode in God's Name with what force he can.

And what if he himself is blown up with the mountain? Well, that sort of thing happens every day in war—and it is war with a vengeance that lies ahead of us. That sort of thing happens every day to our brothers at the Front; and we do not want to be better off than they—to treat our lives as more valuable than theirs. Many at home know what it is to ache at times with a baffled desire to share their sufferings. Here is surely our opportunity to do it, and that in the most fruitful way. For we shall not only be suffering with them, and for the same cause, but we shall be seeing to it that they shall not have suffered in vain.

And in that thought we shall find our motive and inspiration. In the life-long up-



hill struggle which lies ahead of us in our "Fight for the Future," if we really engage in it, we shall be upheld by the same thought which surely upheld our Lord Himself: "For *their* sakes—for *their* sakes I consecrate myself."

It may help us to conserve this inspiration as the years go on if we indulge in what one might call a bit of private Prayer-Book Revision; not, I think, such as need wait for that "far-off divine event" to which some little progress is occasionally made by the august body which meets in this very hall.<sup>1</sup> It involves a revision of the Prayer-Book Calendar by each for himself, so as to include some Khaki-letter Saints' Days—days on which those whom he knew and loved, or admired at a distance, laid down their lives for him and the rest of us. It so happens that to-day is the first of such days in my own private calendar, and I have only to wait three days for the second. It also happens that these first two of my own inner circle to be taken were, of all the men sent out by my own College, among the last, humanly speaking, whom the future could afford to lose. But, if they are gone, we can at least do something to fill their places

<sup>1</sup> I.e. the Great Hall of the Church House, where the Canterbury Convocation sits.

and do their work as well as our own : and it is up to us to do so. It might help to this end if, on our “ Khaki-letter Saints’ Days ” year by year, we stood before their photographs, thanked God for their example, and renewed our vow : “ For his sake—and his—and his—I consecrate myself.”

## I-

### THE SPIRITUAL SIDE OF THE WAR<sup>1</sup>

Providence

THERE are more senses than one in which we might discuss the spiritual side of the war. Though in the story of the "Angels of Mons" there seems to have been more of "the will to believe" than of grounds for believing, so far as the supernatural *appearances* are concerned, there seems little doubt that a good deal of what we have, perhaps wrongly, described as "supernatural" in the past has in this time of stress and trouble become a more common part of the texture of life. To deny divine intervention is, of course, to surrender not only Christianity but Theism—a surrender which the so-called Christian world before the war seems largely to have made. The only question, for those who believe in God in any sense, is not whether God inter-

<sup>1</sup> Chapters I and II are based on addresses to Officers on various occasions.

venes in human affairs, but how far He may be expected to signalize His intervention in ways which can affect or appeal to our senses. I, for one, can see no *a priori* reason why He should not, while I seem to see good reasons why, at a time like the present, whatever the methods of God's action in our lives, we ourselves should be very much more sensitive to His hand and voice than at normal times. "After the wind an earthquake . . . and after the earthquake a fire . . . and after the fire a still, small Voice." There was a wind blowing even in the years before the war: the crucial nature of those years, and the tremendous issues awaiting our action in them, was the common cry of our prophets and seers, though they themselves were surprised, like the rest, at the way in which their words came true. Since then we have had the earthquake, and we are even now in the fire. Is it not a time in which the Voice of God might well become audible—not necessarily through any new measures on His part, but through greater sensitiveness on our own?

For myself, I am disposed to believe, with one who wrote to me lately, that "mysterious changes are taking place in the Upper Air," that something is (like the

Ark) "a preparing" behind the curtain of the Unseen, and that (in the words of the New Testament passage just referred to) "the long-suffering of God is waiting" now, as "in the days of Noah." In *some* sense, if not in the original and literal sense, a time like this cannot well but herald a coming of Christ—a coming not necessarily to final judgment, but possibly even to rejection again. At least it is a time of such spiritual crisis (and the word means "judgment") and spiritual significance as must leave its mark on many centuries, if the world has still so long to run. And at such a time the "supernatural" experiences, intimations, and phenomena of which one does so often hear from apparently trustworthy sources do not, to myself, seem anything unaccountable, but rather the reverse.

Still, it must, of course, be granted that the rival hypothesis gives a rival explanation, which, on that hypothesis, is just as good, viz. that, in a time of such strain, people naturally have new inward experiences which have no reality except for themselves, and, as naturally, are less qualified than normally to assess and describe them. It is no use attempting to argue as between the two explanations. The real quarrel is

between the hypotheses—the hypothesis of Theism, involving the constant and ubiquitous intervention of God in human affairs, though not prescribing either its method or the extent to which we may expect to be aware of it, and the hypothesis which seems to underlie most modern psychology, viz. that everything can and must be explained in terms of human nature itself, anything “supernatural” being, if not denied, at least neglected. It is difficult to see how the religion of such a psychologist can be anything above Deism—the doctrine of a Creator whose present concern in His world is negligible: and Deism is, of course, the opposite pole to Christianity, with its doctrines of “God made Man” and the “Indwelling Spirit.”

It is not, then, the spiritual side of the war in this sense that I want to consider now, though I conceive it to be a real and legitimate field of inquiry. I am thinking rather of the spiritual meaning of the war as a war between principles, and one which vindicates the reality of spiritual laws.

We have long been accustomed to contrast the German creed that “Might is Right” with that which we believe the

Allies to be upholding, and which is, in its essence, "Right is Might." At the end of the day the surer and the only beneficent strength belongs to Right. Might, uncontrolled by principles, becomes merely blind force: a world in which it was supreme would soon be a chaos. And, because we cannot believe that a world so permeated with law as our own either will or was ever meant to become a chaos, we stake our all upon the sanctity and invincibility of moral principles, and cheerfully go to war in their defence.

So far, let us admit, the trend of events seems to justify Germany, with her deification of unprincipled might and her belief in "the right" and even "duty to make war", (I am quoting, of course, from Bernhardi's book,) not on behalf of any principle, but on behalf of her own materialistic proposition that the highest duty of the State is to possess the maximum of material power. Sometimes, perhaps, we are tempted to wonder with Nietzsche whether, up to now, the weakness of "might" may not have been due to a sneaking and cowardly regard for "principles,"—themselves a mere convention or fiction,—and whether it only remained for "might" to become thoroughly unprincipled, as it has in Germany, to prove

itself master after all. Yet here again we are saved by our instinctive faith in law—"our faith in this our universe." If indeed our sense of law is illusory, if only a mistaken respect for our own conventions stands between our world-order and chaos, then life is but a curious and horrible nightmare. It cannot be so, and we will not have it so: rather than admit it, we will throw life itself into the balance against it and make our appeal to God.

There it stands, inevitable, at the back of our cause—at the back of any cause which professes to stand on moral principles—the instinctive human belief in God. The foundation of our faith in our cause and its final triumph is, after all, our faith in God. Germany may seem to triumph; but, we console ourselves, "the triumphing of the wicked is short." Germany may say "there is nothing higher than the State," and act accordingly: we answer in our hearts, even the least religious of us, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous, doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth." Because of that, the "scrap of paper"—materially nothing—became by its spiritual potency the motive for war—the one motive, perhaps, to which the whole British people would have yielded with-



out question. To violate it meant, in the last resort, to pit oneself against the might of God; and the opponent of God cannot finally triumph.

But here we meet again our wonderful British inconsistency, due to our British aversion from thought. "The Englishman," says someone, "not only has no ideas, but he hates an idea when he meets it." The idea over which we are at fault in this instance is the deep but primary one—the one which we assent to in the opening words of the Creed every Sunday—the unity and universality of God. God is One, and "all things visible and invisible" are the coherent empire of which He is sole monarch. Rebellions and usurpations may occur in outlying provinces; but, on the same principle which, as we have just seen, lies at the root of our faith in our own triumph, they cannot result in the formation of independent kingdoms. In the long run the revolted provinces must be either reconciled or crushed. A God Who is not unique and universal may have been a possible conception for the Old Testament Jews: such a God is not a possible conception for the twentieth century. If there is a God, He must be ONE.

And from that flows the universal and equal validity of all His laws. Disobedience to any law of God is rebellion and sin. Not that all sins are equal; but all sins are equally sin. And it is to sin, not sins, that death is attached as its "wages": that is, no arbitrary penalty, but the natural result. Some sins may carry you in that direction more quickly and irretrievably than others, even as swallowing a poison will kill you more quickly and surely than refusing food. Hunger-striking is not more venial than taking strychnine, as a means of suicide: it is only more remediable. In the one case a change of mind will save you anywhere short of the last gasp, though you may perhaps never be as strong again; in the other it is not repentance but an emetic that is wanted, and that at once. Exactly so in the moral sphere. Every transgression of a law of God is a step in the process of moral suicide, and, unless retrieved, will end in death; but some are easier to retrieve than others. We, of course, proceed to distinguish, on this basis, between "sins that matter" and sins that do not; and then, quite wrongly, expect God to abide by our human distinctions. His view, however, is that of the natural sciences in their own domains: all the laws which they recognize

are equally laws, and to violate any one of them is a breach of Law. So for God, the Source and Giver of moral law, all sins are Sin; and of Sin, persisted in, "the wages is death."

How does all this bear on our present subject? In this way, that, while we say, "Germany cannot win because she is violating the laws of God," we ought to go on to admit that neither can we, and for the same reason: not for breach of the same laws, but for breach of others *in the same code*. And we cannot go on to say, "The laws we break do not matter, while the others do." That is exactly what our Lord rebuked the Pharisees for teaching. Bernhardi, in "Germany and the Next War," provokes our scorn by the facile way in which, to save his theory, he relegates Christianity to private life. Admitting that his principles—the right and duty to make war, and so forth—are not consistent with those of Christ, he avoids the obvious conclusion by drawing an impossible sharp line between individual and social morality on the one side, and political morality on the other. The teaching of Christ applies in the former sphere; it cannot in the latter, "or there would be a conflict of duties"—a conflict between the claims of Treitschke and Christ! We smile

contemptuously, and forget that we are perilously near doing the same thing inverted. Invoking the will and purpose and law of God as operative in international relations, we quietly ignore them in personal and social life. We demand and expect the Divine blessing on our cause, because the actions of Germany are immoral; but we take no steps to see whether our own morality is such as to deserve it—whether alliance with us would be a credit to God, or the victory of our arms a gain to His Kingdom.

There has, so far as I know, been no recognition of Divine Sovereignty by the State as such, and certainly no moral legislation worthy of our circumstances. (The Drink Restrictions have next to no value in this connection, being dictated by a desire not for righteousness but for efficiency; we were repeatedly assured, when they were contemplated, that they were to be enforced not on moral but only on military grounds.) Nor can one trace as yet any spontaneous movement towards a greater purity, sobriety, and simplicity “for the glory of God and the good of this kingdom,” on a scale that could be described as national. In some directions the hands of the clock have even gone back. In the first six months

of 1915 the Drink Bill was £8,000,000 higher than what it was in the same period of 1914, and that though so many of the "thirstiest" throats were already abroad. And the quick surrender of our traditional (though perhaps superficial) respect for Sunday, when it seemed to "pay" to throw it over, is not reassuring, even though the old rule has partly come back, on being vindicated by the bad results of breaking it. Yet we count quite confidently on God's support for "our just cause"!

So, let us remember, do the Germans. "Yes," we say, "but on the support of a German God of their own invention." And have we not in effect created a British God, "in our own image and after our own likeness,"—a God Who (like ourselves) abhors bad faith between nations, but will look the other way, when necessary, rather than have to notice the moral delinquencies of individuals whom He likes? "No, I am not afraid," said a little German boy, whom a German professor quotes with approval: "the dear God will fight for us, and He is a German." Are there no Englishmen who, though they would not say it, are virtually thinking, "The dear God will fight for us, and He is—a sportsman"?

There are, in all this, an inconsistency

*Religion (Germ.)*

*God (British)*

and a problem which we have somehow to face and clear up. They have a vital bearing on the actual war and its issues: they have a still more vital bearing on the Fight for the Future. We have no right to expect the help of God in our present struggle, except in so far as we ourselves are His active allies, fighting for Him in that wider and longer conflict in which He is primarily interested. The British Empire of to-day, in its present moral and spiritual condition, offers a foundation and framework for the erection of the Kingdom of God, which, though perhaps less impossible than what Germany could provide, are such as the Kingdom of God could not be adapted to. If there is to be any "building Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land," that land will have to be something more than green and pleasant, more even than honest and loyal to its friends. If we are even to win such a victory as will not hurt ourselves, we must first be brought to the right spirit. "A great victory is a great danger," said Nietzsche to the Germans, not long after 1870-1. The truth of his warning has since been proved. The one antidote to the danger is submission to God, and that in all things. "In *all* thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

"*Whatsoever* has not its roots in faith is sin."

In effect, the central issue of the war, for all concerned in it, is whether the new world afterwards shall be run on material or on spiritual lines. If we are prepared to acquiesce in a new materialism, why do we denounce its prophet, Germany? If we are determined that our civilization after the war shall be spiritual, why do we not denounce (and try to reform) ourselves? Our worst defeats in the war have been at the hands of our own people and in the region of national character. A selfish and commercially minded individualism seems so ingrained in us that even fire cannot burn it out of us. There is no need to dilate on the strikes of the South Wales miners and the Clyde workers; on the spectacle of the numbers, in every class, who are still "on the make"; on the dishonest work too often put even into Government contracts; on the reluctance of the majority to follow even the highest example and the most urgent pleadings in the matter of giving up alcoholic drink; and on the way in which the Drink Trade, fortified by this selfish apathy, set itself to defeat the then proposals of the Government for reform at one of the most critical moments of the war.

For myself, I shall never forget the sensations with which, the morning after reaching London from France towards the end of the second Battle of Ypres, I read two columns in *The Times* on "The Rush to Buy Spirits" before the expected new taxes raised the price. "An order was taken from a single purchaser for 72 gallons of whiskey, and demands for 10 and even 20 dozen bottles seem to have been common." Yet, two months before, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer had told us that "drink was doing us more harm than all the German submarines put together": a month before, the King and Lord Kitchener had banished alcohol from their households to emphasize their sense of the situation; and still the shortage of munitions was losing us daily thousands of men. The day before, passing through Boulogne, one had heard from officers who had themselves come down from the Ypres fighting or repeated what they were told by those who had, tales of the shortage which one dared not then publish, but which have since become common property. And one had for a month been living among and learning to love the men who, in that grim week, had been facing poison-gas and high explosive almost unsupported by artillery because of the selfish-



ness and shortsightedness of people at home. And then one came home to find those same people still hugging their chains, and "every important store in the London area inundated with orders." Was not such conduct as much a national defeat as the loss of the Ypres salient would have been? And then, on top of it all, the Government dropped the whole of its licensing proposals!

The point here, however, is not a denunciation of any particular set of sins or sinners, but a suggestion that, while we are still capable of such defeats at the hands of our own selfishness and indiscipline, we are incapable of such a victory as will also be a triumph for the Kingdom of God. Only such a victory can God Himself ever help us to win: if we want His help we must seek to make ourselves fit to win it. And such we can only become by loyally and logically accepting what is involved in the principles for which we are fighting—the supremacy of God over every part of human life, individual and national: in other words, by a national return to Christianity.

## II

### CHRISTUS VINDICATUS

A NATIONAL return to Christianity may well be thought an astounding proposition just when, to many, Christianity seems to have proved a failure, with the bulk of the "Christian" nations at one another's throats, while of the rest it can only be said, in the words of the Psalmist, "there-out suck they no small advantage." Yet a closer view may show that it is reasonable: and, reasonable or not, it is the only goal at which any one who calls himself a Christian has now, or ever has had, the right to aim. A Christian is one who believes in *and supports* the claim of Christ to universal sovereignty. When the conversion of England ceases to be an object of English hopes and prayers and effort, it will mean that there are no more English Christians left.

That it is not Christianity, but the man-made compromise which has usurped the

name, that stands exposed by the events of to-day has been suggested in the Introduction. It remains to show, in some few directions, how Christianity as Christ taught it has been vindicated afresh. Christianity is a philosophy of life and a prescription for true living. Its claim is that, if the world would follow out its directions, the result would be the highest possible good of all and the realizing of the human ideal. It also claims that, along any other lines, mankind can never reach its goal: for man was made by God, for God, and in God's image, and only when in his right relation to God can he be himself.

This incapacity of man by himself to shape his own course and find his true happiness is one of the most obvious points at which the war has endorsed the Christian creed. "It is not in man that walketh" says ~~one of the old prophets~~ *Jeremiah* "to direct his steps." Man all down the ages has been enlarging his knowledge and his mastery both of himself and of his physical environment. No age has seen so great an advance in this direction as our own. Scientific discovery has made it very really an age of miracle. No conquest seems to be denied to science in its own vast domains. And yet, how those domains and those conquests

have suddenly shrivelled! How pitiably little a hundred years of material progress could do either to avert the greatest tragedy of history or to make it tolerable to its victims! It was advance along an altogether different line, and obedience to other and higher laws, which alone could have saved the world from its present predicament. But in that higher region we still seem as puzzled and powerless as is the savage in face of the mysteries of nature. And yet, while we have had to fight our own way to the conquest of nature, the keys of the spiritual kingdom have been offered to us freely. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps": but "thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it,' when ye turn to the right hand or when ye turn to the left." "Apart from Me," says Our Lord, "ye can do nothing": but "Lo, I am with you all the days," so that the experience of any man can be that of St. Paul, "Our sufficiency is of God."

The acute sense of insufficiency and powerlessness is now, as it were, the background of all our experience. How many of us know what it is to have all that makes life worth living not only removed to a distance, but set in circumstances where,

at any moment of day or night, the stray bullet or the random shell may without warning simply obliterate it, as a wave obliterates a scratch on the sand! And all the time our wealth and wisdom and love, however ample, are literally powerless to save one life. "Out here," wrote an officer last summer, in a letter quoted in *The Times* by "A Junior Sub.,"—"Out here there is one guiding factor, and that is the fact of one's utter helplessness as an individual." What a gain under such circumstances to be able to continue, as he does, ". . . and one's absolute trust in a Higher Power to keep one safe!" As an undergraduate friend of my own, soon after killed by a stray bullet at midnight, said in his first letter to me from the trenches: "The more one sees of these large shells and their ghastly effects, the more one feels that everything is in the hands of Providence."

Nor is it only of individuals that this "human insufficiency" proves to be true. Nations are no more masters of their fate than men, and things have happened since July 1914 which would have been literally incredible to most of us before. Who, for instance, could have pictured beforehand the whole calculations of four Great Powers, and possibly the whole course of the war,

upset by a difference between the King of Greece and his Prime Minister? In the general sense of bewilderment, of having reached an *impasse*, of having exhausted all the resources of everything but brute force, while still the war spreads aimlessly on like an uncontrollable inundation, we are inclined to echo those strange words of Mr. C. F. G. Masterman early in December 1915: "The war seems almost to have been taken out of the hands of the rulers of nations and to have passed into the hands of the devil himself." But the true comment upon them is, surely, that the war never was "in the hands of the rulers of nations," and that, if indeed it has "passed into the hands of the devil himself," it has done so because the nations have not hitherto definitely put it into the hands of God.

For the correlative fact, the explanation and remedy of human powerlessness, is the universal availability of God. The phrase is cumbrous, but it is truer than "Divine omnipotence": ~~for, in all His relations~~ with human wills, God can only act as our faith allows Him to. "In all thy ways *acknowledge* Him, and He shall direct thy *paths*." Anyhow, along with the new sense of helplessness there *has* come home to very many the hitherto largely neglected

fact of God, as the needed corrective of their own insufficiency. This is a ~~second~~ point in which the war has vindicated the Christian philosophy of life, based as it is on the twin facts of man's need of God and God's love for man. "You may take it from me, sir," said a soldier—a total stranger—to whom I put the question in a few minutes' talk, just before he returned to the trenches after a spell at one of the Base Camps in France last spring, "they have been doing more thinking about God up there in the last six months than most of them have done in the rest of their lives." And where "thinking about God" has been followed up by going to Him, in penitence and prayer, the Presence of God has been proved afresh ten thousand times over. "Mother," wrote a young officer, one about whose spiritual state that mother had sometimes been anxious, and whose highly-strung temperament suffered intensely in life at the Front, "Mother, I have seen death, and death is indescribable; but 'under the shadow of the Almighty' I have found a peace greater than the terrors of death." He was killed in a charge a week later, and a brother officer testified that he was one who "would go anywhere." "Only Faith could have done it," wrote another from the trenches to myself,

a day or two after the battle of Loos, from which only he and one other officer of his battalion returned alive and unwounded. God is there, then, after all; and "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

Once more, the other-worldly quality of the Christian view of life is a thing which the war has amply vindicated. Material security, as we have seen, has proved its utter unreality; but that is only what the Bible bids us expect.

" Comfort, content, delight,  
The ages' slow-bought gain,  
They vanished in a night:  
Only ourselves remain  
To face the naked days  
In silent fortitude . . ."

But we need a roof over our head for the naked days, and we instinctively find it in "a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Formerly it was almost irritating to be reminded that "this is not your rest," and that "here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Now we are thankful, as, like Abraham, we "go out, not knowing whither we go," to be able with him to "look for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God." On the Christian



showing of the relation between this life and the next, no "strange thing" has happened unto us, but such as was to be expected in a life which is at once transitory and fraught with sin. "In the world ye shall have tribulation": the words are addressed to disciples and friends, and the world must not be surprised if it, as the source of the sin, also shares the suffering. Meanwhile the disciple and friend has the encouragement which the world has not—"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," and has also the warning to guide his life: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Many, surely, to whom such words were meaningless or even distasteful before, have now discovered and welcomed the truth of them, and find their sole strength for bearing this life in the thought that "our citizenship is in heaven." Is not this a vindication of Christianity?

Yet again, the chief rule of Christ for the conduct of this life has been borne out in an almost startling way. Thousands, not to say millions, have discovered in the school

of war what not all the preaching in the world could persuade them of—that self-seeking, after all, is unnatural and unsatisfying, while sacrifice can be, not an irksome duty, but an inspiration and a joy. Have we sufficiently considered the miracle of the trenches—the unfailing and strictly supernatural cheerfulness of the men under conditions which it makes us at home groan and shudder to think of? Is it not strictly a fulfilment, helped by the prayers of the praying world, of the paradox of Jesus Christ? “If any man willeth to come after Me, let him deny”—efface—“himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever willeth to save his life shall lose it: and whosoever willeth to lose his life for My sake shall find it.” “I never enjoyed myself so much,” wrote yet another young officer to his old headmaster the day before his death: “You will know what I mean. I never knew before what it was to be taken so completely out of myself.” Self, after all, as Christ said, is the enemy: the effacement of self is and always has been the key to true life. But how many of those who could now enter into the words just quoted would ever have believed it till they learned it at the Front? And how many will keep and live by that lesson when they return?

Surely this is another vindication of Christianity to set against the reproach which some would say has come upon it; and surely there is also here a hint of how the Fight for the Future must depend upon a revival of Christianity? For the solving of all the problems which lie ahead of us the one thing needful is *enough unselfishness*—a nation of men and women “taken completely out of themselves” in the absorption of following the Christ.

And lastly (to look in but one more direction) the war has vindicated the Gospel of Christ in its revelation of the undreamed-of splendour of raw human nature, when touched by sacrifice into fire. We have seen already that the Christian philosophy of life is “based on the twin facts of man’s need of God and God’s love for man.” Parallel to these facts are another pair—the fact that man was made in God’s image, and that God has found His own highest expression in the image of man. The Old Testament and the New both begin with tributes to the worth and dignity of human nature through its intimate connection with God. And so even a strict theologian like Athanasius is not afraid to say of the Incarnation: “He Himself became Man that we might be *made God*.” The method of the making

is spiritual union with Christ, the Head of the Body, through Whom the scale is (so to speak) continuous from the lowest thing in human shape up to the majesty of the Supreme Father. And spiritual union with Christ means the absorbing into man of the Spirit of Christ, the "extension of the Incarnation" through one human life after another becoming the reflection and embodiment of "this mind, which was also in Christ Jesus," when, "being in the form of God, He emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a slave, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Can we fail to connect the sublime and unbelievable heroism of the trenches—not merely that of one or another specially singled out for distinction, but that which seems to be the endowment of almost all—with "this mind, which was also in Christ Jesus"? Their splendour, as well as their cheerfulness, is a supernatural thing, a fruit of their sacrifice and a vindication of Christ's law of life. "In the meanest mortal" says Thomas Carlyle "there lies something nobler. . . . It is not to taste sweet things, but to do noble and true things, and vindicate himself under God's heaven as a God-made man, that the poorest son of Adam dimly longs. Show him the

way of doing that, the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero."

"Show him the way of doing that": it is what Christ has been trying to do for two thousand years, and with what fractional success! Now we have learned, on a new and gigantic scale, first, the sublime possibilities of human nature, secondly, the fact that only by self-sacrifice can they be realized. There is a hero in every man, and there is also, if you can get at it, the desire to let him out; but he only can come out by the door of sacrifice, and all the conventions of life in the old days tended to keep that door fast shut. Now that it has been opened, are we going to let it shut to again?

If there is a hero in every man, there is also a saint. The need for heroism, in the narrower sense, will pass to a large extent with the war; the need for sainthood will then become more urgent than ever. And sainthood, truly conceived of, is, after all, "the larger heroism." A saint is a hero who is heroic *all round*. I heard lately of a soldier who, having won the V.C., returned to his native town and, by the "kindness" of his admirers, was kept blind drunk for the whole of his leave, which had then to be extended to let him recover. (This happened before the No-Treating order, and may serve

to show how obviously we ought never to repeal it.) Such a hero is not heroic all round: and there are many who will face a machine-gun without flinching, and yet fail pitifully before a woman or a sneer. If in the fight for the present we need heroes, in the Fight for the Future what we need is saints—heroes who are heroic all round and in any kind of danger. If we have seen “the poorest son of Adam” (“which was the son of God,” as St. Luke reminds us) kindled in his thousands by sacrifice “into a hero,” why can we not also, by the same prescription, produce the needed supply of saints?

The Christian ideal, and the Christian way of attaining to it, have surely been vindicated through the war. If there had been more Christians in all the nations, the war would either not have happened, or have been a far simpler and kinder thing. It is only a vast increase in the number of Christians in the original sense—men who, being Christians, are saints, and being saints are super-heroes—which can now mend the past and save the future. To quote Mr. G. K. Chesterton's epigram again, “Christianity has not been tried and found wanting, it has been found difficult and not tried.” What we need now is an army of men and women, in

every rank and walk of life—and not least among those who are fighting the fight for the present, where one fears there are some heroes *not* heroic all round—who, at whatever cost of difficulty and opposition and (if need be) martyrdom in its modern forms, will give Christianity the trial it has never yet had.

“ No easy hopes or lies  
Shall bring us to our goal,  
But iron sacrifice  
Of body, will, *and soul.*”

Men and women who have learned the attraction of sacrifice in a lower cause should not fear to face it in the highest of all—in that Fight for the Future which is a fight both for our own country and for the Kingdom of God.

### III

#### THE ANSWER TO ATHEISM<sup>1</sup>

A FEW weeks ago I received a letter from a stranger, a professing atheist, who was apparently kind enough to think I was worth converting, and sanguine enough to expect to convert me. His chief weapon was a newspaper article (I imagine it was his own handiwork) in which the contradictory utterances of English divines about the war were set forth as proving the bankruptcy of Religion.

In particular there were quotations from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and the Archdeacon of London. The first said: "This war is the work of the devil"; the second said something which might possibly be represented as meaning "This war is the work of God"; while the third was quoted as asking "Where does

<sup>1</sup> A speech at a Mass Meeting for Men in November 1915.



God come in?" The article, with solemn contumely, informs its readers how much these eminent people receive *per annum* for saying this sort of thing, and from their inability even so to tell the same lie deduces that Christianity is done for.

It would be tedious, and hardly necessary, to show in detail how such statements—even in the form here given them—admit of being reconciled. But that question of the Archdeacon of London—"Where does God come in?"—may at any rate provide the starting-point of my own words this afternoon. I take this subject not so much by way of convincing you—for I hardly imagine that most of you would be here if you did *not* believe that God does somehow come in—as for another reason, which is this. If God's own account of Himself, as given in the Bible, is true, then three things are clear enough. First, that the war is not a disproof but a vindication of God, because it has come about through direct disobeying of Him; secondly, that if this be so, national obedience is the only way of national recovery; and thirdly, that not only to obey Him ourselves, and bring our own lives into line with His purposes for them, but to do our very best to make others do likewise, is in these days a national as well as a religious

duty. In a word, we need to get our own faith clearer, stronger, more practical, not merely nor chiefly for the comfort of it to ourselves, but in order to pass it on to the nation.

For there is already being waged around us a Fight for the Future which is independent of the results of the present war, and will reach its most intense and critical period in the year or two after peace is declared. Victory in the war of the nations will not necessarily carry with it victory in the spiritual war: it will be possible, only too possible, to beat Germany and yet lose the bigger battle by losing our own souls. Meanwhile, the best thing we can do to help the nation to win in both wars is to increase its faith in and obedience to God. And that means bringing out *our own* faith into the open, and passing it on to those around us. In the past we have prided ourselves on British reticence about spiritual things. Now that, like various other things we used to take pride in, has proved to be a source of weakness instead. Nay, it is almost a crime. In days like these the hoarding of faith is like the hoarding of gold. If there is one thing more than another which the country needs, it is the uniting and driving power of a living faith. Men who could

help to meet that need, and will not, are almost traitors to their country. We need soldiers badly—and shells: but we need saints even more than either. “A saint is some one who makes it easier for others to believe in God.” That is precisely what is needed. The fact that, at first sight, faith in God has become more difficult lays an added obligation on any man who *does* believe in Him—who sees, perhaps, more clearly now than ever how hopeless life would be *without* God—to bring out his faith and pass it on to his neighbour. It is only in so far as the nation at large can recover faith in and submission to God that we can look to the future with any hope. On this the whole “Fight for the Future” turns.

So, then, to return to our atheist, “Where does God come in?” In what sense is the war not a disproof but a *vindication* of God?

Put it this way: Suppose you find, out in a field, some new kind of aeroplane, all complete, with the inventor himself to act as pilot. And suppose the pilot takes you aboard, and gives you lessons in managing his machine. Suppose then, at a certain point, when you think you are getting on finely, you turn round and throw the pilot overboard, and say, “I shall manage the thing better if I am left to myself.” For

a time, perhaps, all seems to go well ; and then come difficulties, and you realize that there are parts of the machine you do not quite understand, and certain atmospheric conditions that are more than you can reckon with. The pilot, who has survived his dropping, very generously offers to come back and help you through (one must suppose that he *can* do so in this “new kind of aeroplane”), but of course you are too proud for that. And so there comes the inevitable crash, and you and the machine go to pieces together. Suppose all this happening, and ask yourself, “Should I have a right to complain either of the pilot or of his machine?”

Well, then, *if* human life is God’s invention, and if He meant it to be worked on His own lines, under His own direction, have we any right to complain because a world which has taken itself *out of* His hands, and refused as mere “interference” the help He offered, has brought itself to ruin in consequence? “No man,” said Lord Derby when he took over the organization of recruiting—“no man has a right to say that any system is a failure unless he has done his best to make it a success.” And how much, one should like to know, have nine-

teen-twentieths of the Christians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries done to make God's system for man a success?

What is that system? What are the lines laid down by God for the safe and successful running of human life? You will find all through the Bible, Old and New Testaments alike, that man is by nature a "dirigible"—a creature capable of being directed—but for that very reason needing to have the right director. And, all through, that Director is God. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "In all thy ways acknowledge *Him*, and *He* shall direct thy paths." That is what the Old Testament says; and what about the New? "Abide in Me, and I in you: as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, even so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me . . . for *apart from Me* ye can do nothing." Nothing could be much clearer: and it all means that the whole life of man, if it would be safe and successful, must be lived in the spirit of that brief, comprehensive prayer which is the motto of the City of London: "Domine, dirige nos"—"Lord, direct us."

So much for God's plan for individual lives: what about His directions for social

relationships? "If there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'" "By love serve one another." But is that the law which governs modern society, or modern commerce, or modern politics, internal or international? "By love serve one another"? Would it not be nearer the facts to say, "By competition fleece and enslave one another"? And then, when we have been running our life—personal, social, political—on lines which are the very opposite to what God has laid down, the world turns round and cries out upon God!

No, it is not fair—it is not British: and it is for you and me, who see this clearly, to go hard at it till we make the others see it and act accordingly. It is our own wilful mismanagement of God's invention which has led to the smash. The one sensible and logical course is to say, "God has not failed, but *we* have; let us put ourselves back into His hands again." That is the course to which we have to persuade our fellow-countrymen by every means in our power. Fortunately, God's forbearance is limitless. "There is forgiveness with Thee, therefore Thou mayest be feared"; whereas otherwise, after such disobedience

and failure, the world dare hardly return to Him. But, with the Cross of Jesus Christ still standing before us—that Cross which shells and bullets have so often spared as by a miracle in French and Belgian villages, that it might speak its message to men who at the eleventh hour were remembering God—with the Cross still before us, and the story of the Prodigal Son to encourage us, a faithless and perverse generation can come back to its Father, like any individual sin-ruined soul, and begin again on the right lines. That is the Gospel which we have got to press upon our own generation. It is awaiting it more anxiously than some of us dare to believe.

But how shall we bring the truth home? In the first place, remember that you will only convert the nation by converting individual men and women, and that the natural people for *you* to convert are the people next around you. If every Christian would begin on his own immediate surroundings, the whole country would soon be covered without any kind of organization.

In the second place, remember that, after all, we do *talk* about things we are really keen about, whether other people ask us to or no. A passion for old china, or postage

stamps, or politics, or any other hobby, will soon creep into the enthusiast's talk: you will not be in his company very long before it will come out. Well, then, *if* we are really interested in what always has been the deepest interest in life, and is so more than ever to-day—I mean the personal relation of a man with God—*of course* our interest will be reflected in our conversation; and we shall find it met, even in the most unlikely quarters, by the same interest, living deep down in other hearts. There are men and women all round us only longing for the help which comes from direct contact with simple, living faith: and, if our own faith is not so very simple or living, there is nothing will make it such like trying to share it with other men.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are probably many lay-folk who are beginning to feel in a new degree the duty of “witnessing,” in some way or other, but do not quite know how or where to begin. The importance just now of such lay ministry of individual to individual cannot be overstated; and the need of it will go on increasing for some years, through the wastage of so many future clergy in the war. An admirable and concise little guide to such lay ministry has just been issued by the CHURCH OF ENGLAND MEN'S SOCIETY, with a Preface by the Archbishop of York; it is called “Go FORWARD,” and published by the Society at 6d.



But, in the third place, remember also that the lips only preach successfully what the life is practising honestly. What we have to impress on the people round us is that the trouble has arisen from leaving God out: men have *not* "acknowledged Him in all their ways," and so have given Him no chance to "direct their paths." Well, then, what about ourselves? Are *our* lives thus systematically and consistently God-controlled? Is "Domine, dirige nos" the continual, spontaneous cry of *our* hearts the whole way along the path of life? Are we in any real sense "abiding in Him and He in us"? If we are, our lives and our lips will be telling the same tale, and then the world will listen to it. But I fancy that this means, for most of us, a vast amount more Prayer than we put in at present.

For Prayer is the key to the situation. If human nature is a "dirigible," not made to go without its Director, then Prayer is what puts the Director in control of a life. A Christian is a human being controlled to his own best advantage by Christ; but he is also, to the end, a free man, and his Master can only control him in so far as he himself consents and co-operates. That consent and co-operation is expressed in Prayer—the constant submitting

our own will to the plans of God, correcting our own judgment by the wisdom of God, and supplementing our own weakness by the power of God. "In *all* thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Being what we are, unable to see our own way or guide our own steps, we shall not deem it safe to walk alone for five minutes: we shall find ourselves more and more driven to do what St. Paul calls "pray without ceasing"—that is, be so constantly aware of God's Presence and of our dependence on Him that even the smallest emergencies as they arise will make us resort to Prayer.

Only in proportion as we do this will our lives be really "God-controlled": only in so far as they are "God-controlled" will they be what either He or we ourselves want them to be. But, as God bit by bit extends His sway over the whole of a life which gives Him continual entrance by Prayer, three new divine things will begin to emerge in it—three things that prove "Here God Himself, not mere man, is at work": a new personality, a new passion, a new power.

(1) A new personality. When a godless fellow becomes a Christian, what is it that happens? Not that he drops old vices and

puts on new virtues, but that the whole machinery of his life comes under a new *control*.

Formerly it was worked by "self" in self's own interests: now it is run by Christ, and for Him. For a time, of course, there is a struggle—the "old man," as St. Paul calls him, retiring reluctantly before the "new man, who is being continually reinforced, and made after the image of God his Creator." But a time comes when the Christian is meant to be able to say, again with St. Paul, "I live no longer as I myself, but *Christ liveth in me*." It is a case, not of new virtues, but of a *new personality* appearing in him; and that the personality of Jesus Christ Himself—the Inventor at last really and effectually in possession of the life He made.

(2) And then—and by natural consequence—a new passion. If Christ is living in a man, then, of course, Christ's desires and ambitions will soon appear in him. The same passion that brought our Lord from heaven "for us men and for our salvation" will also master the whole of the Christ-controlled life, and fill it with that missionary spirit—the reflection of Christ's own passion for souls—which is always a part of full and true Christianity.

(3) And, thirdly, as the new personality leads to the new passion, so will it also lead to a new *power*—the power of Christ alive in the believer, because he is living “no longer as himself,” but has “Christ living in him.” “He that *abideth* in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for apart from Me ye can do nothing.” “If ye *abide* in Me, and My words abide in you, then ask what ye will, and it shall be done for you.” So our Lord promised; and all down the ages there have been men and women who have found it true—who have cried with St. Paul, “I have strength for anything *in Him* Who gives me the power.”

If there are not more of us to-day who can say that, is it—once again—His fault or our own? “No man”—I repeat Lord Derby’s words—“has a right to say that any system is a failure unless he has done his best to make it a success.” The condition of the new power is the “abiding in Christ”—the keeping self continually under His control—which, we have seen, can only be secured by “praying without any intermission,” keeping continually sensitive to God and in touch with Him, building the *whole* of life on a substructure of consultation and communion with Him Who made

and alone can guide us. But is that the sort of place Prayer holds in our lives? or is it just a small item in each day's programme, morning and evening, or a special remedy when things go specially wrong? If so, it is not what it is meant to be, and no wonder we do not get the right results.

Do you know the story of the millionaire who went mad and thought he was bankrupt? His whole means—so he imagined—were reduced to £1 a week, allowed him by the charity of his creditors. Every Saturday he went to the Bank, drew his £1, and on that lived miserably for the week that followed; and so on, year after year, until he died. And yet, all that time, he was worth a million of money, and could have had the whole of it as easily as the £1 a week. Has his story any message of reproach to us, in this matter of drawing upon God by Prayer? Are we, in our spiritual life, trying to make both ends meet on £1 a week, when we might command all the resources of God?

Whatever it has been with us in the past, surely *now* is the time to alter it. The resources of man are at an end: civilization, science, progress—all the things we trusted in—have failed the world in its greatest need. But we have never yet seriously drawn upon

the resources of God, "Who alone can bring good out of evil and make even the wrath of man to turn to His praise." Are we going to give God His chance even now? Or is the verdict of history upon the England of to-day—the country which, we believe, has been chosen to defend God's cause—to be the evangelist's verdict upon the city chosen to be the home of Jesus Christ—"He could do there no mighty work, because of their unbelief"?

#### IV.

### THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE FRIEND (SOME THOUGHTS ON PRAYER IN WAR-TIME) :

"SOME people only pray because they want something, not because they need an atmosphere to breathe, or because they need a friend."

It was the word "atmosphere" that arrested me when I read that sentence lately in a friend's house. Any one who has lived at Oxford, or at any other proverbially relaxing place, where a man never feels quite his best, knows the full meaning of the phrase "a change of air," even if it is only for an hour or two. For years past one of the things that have kept one alive has been the practice of making pilgrimages, as often as time allows, to the top of Shotover Hill, near Oxford, for the sake of breathing,

\* An Address on the Day of United Prayer at the Kingsway Hall, November 1, 1915, reprinted from *Evangelical Christendom*.

even for half an hour or so, a different atmosphere. The spiritual as well as physical benefit one gets from such hill-top séances has given one great sympathy for the people in the Old Testament who set up their altars "on every high hill."

One of the chief purposes of Prayer, surely,—and especially just now,—is to give our spirits a sorely needed change of air. It is a way of escape into a different atmosphere—a hill-top atmosphere, from which we can return, calmed and braced, into the uncertainty and depression of that "valley of humiliation" through which God is leading our country to-day. We all need a great deal of Prayer nowadays, were it only as a means of escape from the prison-house of the actual. The actual is too horrible to stop and contemplate, unless a man knows that there *is* an escape from it, that it is *not* final, that there *is* another world, and that his "citizenship" is there.

I heard the other day of an officer who went mad through having to live for weeks in a trench which was known to be mined, and might at any moment be blown up, while nothing could be done on our side to prevent it. His position, after all, is that of most of us in one way or another. Apart from the secret of escape into the clear, safe



atmosphere of eternal things, which we have in Prayer, how could we stand it? With that secret, the outlook is so utterly different. "It ought to be impossible," wrote another young officer to me a few weeks ago, after describing a fairly nerve-racking experience of his own—"it ought to be impossible to panic with the words, 'Be still, then, and know that I am God,' in one's mind." In "the practice of the Presence of God" he had found the way of escape from the actual; and it made him not only far happier as a man, but far more efficient as an officer.

But what multitudes there are around us who do *not* know our secret, and are bearing the strain quite unrelieved! Surely, one practical outcome of any special gathering for Prayer these days should be to make us keener not only to live ourselves more constantly in the "higher atmosphere," and so banish the worry and depression which paralyse true life, but also to pass on our secret to those who live half-stifled in the valley. "To bear the burden of the world's sin and folly without Christ is the shortest road to madness," says some one. Anything we can do to save our fellow-countrymen from trying to do so will be patriotic work of the first order.

But what is it that really creates a

reviving atmosphere for us? Is it not *people* more than anything? Do we not realize in these days more than ever that, though a week at the seaside may be all very well as a restorative, a day with certain people—with some one, perhaps, who is at the Front—would do far more for both our physical and our moral health? *People* are the true atmosphere-creators: and so in Prayer, it is a *Person* Who makes the atmosphere which calms and revives our souls. You may remember how, in Mr. A. E. W. Mason's story, "Four Feathers," the hero, at a moment of desperate danger, buries his face in the desert sand and conjures up, and, as it were, draws towards him with all his might, the face of the girl he loved away in Ireland; and it gives him back the nerve he was losing. Is not that a picture of Prayer, only with this crucial difference, that in Prayer the Friend is *always* there—as near to us as our faith will let Him be?

"Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet;  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

The reason why we fail at one time and succeed at another is not because God is

sometimes near and sometimes far: it is because our *practice* of His presence varies so much. "The Lord is with you while ye be with Him": and a man who has discovered his own insufficiency, and the critical nature, sometimes, even of our "odd moments" and "off days," will soon realize that St. Paul's "Pray without any intermission" is not just a bit of pious exuberance or a counsel of perfection, but a most practical and scientific direction for life. We are meant to live "in Him" Who has indeed said, "Lo, I am with you all the days," but has also said, "*Abide* in Me, and I in you, for *apart from Me* ye can do nothing." We can only "abide" by constantly, as a matter of habit and of policy, in small things as in great, "*practising* the presence of God." Then the whole responsibility of our lives passes over to Him, and, as we watch Him "doing wondrously" in them, like Manoah's angel-visitor, we enter afresh into the meaning of that central saying of St. Paul, "I live no longer as I myself, but Christ liveth in me." We discover the fact—which so needs to be recognized in public as well as personal life to-day—that Prayer puts at the disposal of man the genius of God.

And it is here that the active, creative

—may I say “remunerative”?—power of Prayer comes in. “Some people only pray”—let me repeat the words—“because they want something, not because they need an atmosphere to breathe, or because they need a friend.” Prayer is meant to remunerate him who prays. The mistake referred to is that of regarding it as only, or chiefly, a source of supplies. It is first and foremost “the Christian’s vital breath”—his way of escape into the atmosphere away from which his soul is stifled; and that atmosphere is but another term for the realized Presence of his Friend. But, given that Friend—at hand, omnipotent, all-wise, all-loving—then of course the Prayer, which is an opening up of all our life to Him, must include the drawing from Him of all that we need for its equipment.

It is told of Alexander the Great that, a petitioner approaching him when he was busy, he bade the man to go to his treasurer and get whatever he wanted from him. The man seized his opportunity, and asked for some perfectly enormous sum. The treasurer, aghast, referred the matter back to the king, who replied, “This man honours me by asking for so much; let it be given him immediately.” One of the things the war has been teaching us, by the unbelievable

heroism which a big demand can call out of common human nature, is that we have hitherto asked of men, in Christ's name, not too much, but too little. Have we also been asking too little of God?

"Looking back at the end," writes the Scottish saint, Andrew Bonar, "I expect there will be great grief for our sins of omission: omission to get from God what we might have got by praying."

## V

### THE EMERGENCY AND THE OPPORTUNITY<sup>1</sup>

"Jesus therefore lifting up His eyes, and seeing that a great crowd cometh unto Him, saith to Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? But this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do."—ST. JOHN vi. 5, 6.

OUR Lord and His disciples were confronted with an emergency for which they were, humanly speaking, quite unready and unequipped. They had retired, as we know from the parallel versions, for much-needed rest, and their departure had been so hurried that (as soon transpired) the whole provision of food which they had with them was quite inadequate even for their own needs. The appearance of the crowd in the distance was, to say the least of it, undesired and disconcerting. In a few minutes they would

<sup>1</sup> A sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on the Sunday next before Advent, 1915.

be in the thick of just such a problem as they had sought to avoid.

What was to be their course of action? It is, as we might have expected, the divine and not the human eye which looks ahead to meet the difficulty. To the minds of the disciples it was, so far, only a nuisance; to the Master it already appears as an emergency. And, for God and for any man who shares God's outlook, the other side of an emergency is always an opportunity.

Our Lord's first step is to stir in the slow, tired minds of His followers a sense of the emergency, by hinting at the opportunity behind it. He does it in terms which those minds could hardly be expected to take seriously just at first. It was as though He had said, "Suppose we ask these five thousand people to stay to supper?" when the only thought in their minds so far was, "Of course we cannot receive them, but it may be rather difficult to get them to go away quickly." The answer of Philip is no doubt exactly what our Lord expected: "If we had the whole contents of a bakery within reach, and the money to buy it up—and we have neither—we should be as far off as before from being able to act upon *that* suggestion."

But the question, the hint, was deliberate

and serious. God does not play with men by putting ideals and ambitions before them which are, in their nature, unattainable. "This He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do." The most ideal way of dealing with any situation that arises is sure to be the most divine way; and the most divine way is also the most feasible, since the will of God is, of all the possible alternatives, that which has the most chance of happening. There is, as we shall see, a condition attached: the invariable demand for faith from man's side to release and actualize the divine will and purpose. But, given that, it is God's will that must emerge, in the end, from any given situation. And so it proved on that desert shore of the Sea of Galilee. The interruption grew into an emergency; the emergency ripened into an opportunity. The small but crucial contribution from the human side was forthcoming—the raw material for the miracle—and the power of God provided the rest. Nay, more, as always happens in such transactions between God and man, the small human contribution was more than repaid. From that which was left over of the poor contents of one basket the disciples gathered their twelve baskets full.



The parallel between their situation and the spiritual emergency which faces the Church of God to-day is not, I think, very far to seek. For us, too, there has been an interruption which has broadened and deepened into an appalling emergency. It is to our shame that we have been somewhat long in seeing it. This was part of the natural penalty of that lowness of spiritual life of which we have complained to one another at Church Congresses and Diocesan Conferences for many years past, but which was still only too evident when the war began. Ever since, we have been learning the disastrous consequences of having, so to speak, but five loaves and two small fishes, when even our own needs demanded far more. No wonder we felt unable at once to cope with the new heart-hunger of the world!

But now at last there are cheering tokens that we are beginning to face the emergency in the only right way—which is, to disarm it by turning it into an opportunity. I am thinking of several things which seem to point this way, but especially of the Archbishop of Canterbury's project of a National Religious Movement recently announced. The opportunity and the need for such are obvious; the means of carrying through the

project have yet to be sought and found. But here the story before us comes to our aid. "Man's extremity" ever has been "God's opportunity"; for human nature generally insists on exhausting its own resources before it will consent to draw upon God. And so material bankruptcy is often the beginning of spiritual wealth. So it might be, and may be, in this present bankruptcy of the world.

Till lately, typically Laodicean—blending just a little of the warmth of the supernatural with the cold water of those material calculations which really determined all its actions—our age deserved no other message than that delivered by St. John to the Angel of the Church in Laodicea: "Thou sayest, 'I am rich and have made money and have need of nothing,' and knowest not thou art the wretched one and the pitiable, and poor and blind and stripped!" Now at least we have been driven to recognize the facts of the case; and, to a man who really believes in God, a fact faced squarely is never an enemy. If we know that we are poor, we have the first condition for growing rich. The great practical question is, Shall we *use* this initial advantage by providing the other necessary conditions for drawing upon the wealth of God?

The first and most necessary of these is the faith which will see in the human emergency the divine opportunity—the faith which, refusing to be content with “coming through somehow,” will take as its ambition to bring the highest good out of the deepest evil.

“Was not earth’s most auspicious hour  
 One darksome, sad, and wild?  
 When Crucifixion was the birth,  
 Redemption was the child.”

That is how it happened when God in His own Person took the field against sin. If the Church of the Living God is indeed, through union with her Head, divine, then the same should be the issue of her campaigns; and she cannot, in self-respect claim anything less than the divine prerogative of causing even the wrath of man to turn to God’s praise.

The challenge to our faith is, of course, already appalling; and even the stoutest of believers and idealists has, I suppose, his moments of doubt. Do not let us undervalue the force of this challenge by any ostrich-like hiding of our heads in the sands of cheap optimism. In particular, I think, we have yet to realize that the past

spiritual weakness and unwisdom of all the Churches is an even greater handicap than we have admitted. I have been spending this last week in work among soldiers, and especially officers, in a large camp on the South Coast. It has been a fresh revelation of three things which have been burnt into one's mind and soul by much one has previously learned from similar quarters.

One is the extreme indifference to, at any rate, organized religion which characterizes the large majority, and the almost pagan standards of life which pass too largely quite unchallenged—especially, I fear, among a certain type of officer—and are accepted as “all one can expect.” In the home camps, at least, “let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die” appears to express the practical creed of far too many. Nor is it fair to be hard on such. In many cases their paganism is a half-conscious measure of self-defence, which the shortage of vital religion in the air around them seems to make necessary. As one very able young officer said to me, referring quite frankly to himself, “One has to do one's best to live on the surface and avoid introspection; for if one begins probing beneath it, it's all up with one.” So it is, very likely, for the man who, possessing a conscience, only

probes down as far as self and its sin, and does not know how to go on deeper to God and His forgiveness. But this dread of facing oneself—what does it say to *us*, who believe in and are supposed to be spreading His Gospel?

The second thing which one has felt afresh in the past week's work is the reality of the difficulties of those who do think: difficulties due, primarily, to the war, but also to their own lack of quite elementary spiritual knowledge—again a reproach to ourselves who are trustees of it—and, not least, to the feebleness and inconsistencies of what has too often passed as Christian life. I am sure that many are deterred from trust in and obedience to Christ by the very fact that their own instincts of what a Christian should be are truer than those of all but a few professing Christians. "I have only met one real Christian in my life," said another young officer to me the other night; "he was a man who really would have given you the coat off his back—but he was regarded as the village idiot." Even allowing for some exaggeration, due to bitterness of soul at what seemed to him the unopposed triumph of moral evil, I think there is something in his words to compel heart-searching.

And thirdly, one has realized afresh, with shame and confusion of face, how little even those who have some faith in and devotion to Christ seem to hope or expect from the organized Church. "If ever I do find my way to Christianity," said the man I have just quoted, "I think I shall probably be 'Salvation Army.'" There, again, there is surely an indication of where we have failed, and how we might succeed.

Now I do not mention these things with any desire to depress—far from it—but in order that, in facing our overwhelming task of turning such an emergency into an opportunity, we may have the worst of the facts before us, know where we are, and lay our plans accordingly. As I have ventured to say already, a fact faced squarely is never an enemy, if a man believes in God. The reason is that God is always there, beside him, to *alter* facts; and it is an advantage to know what we want God to alter, because we ourselves have to work alongside Him in altering it. And if penitence as well as faith, humiliation as well as encouragement, are necessary to put us in the right attitude for co-operation with God, then facts which produce penitence are friends in disguise. To abase

oneself frankly and cry "*Peccavi*" is a stronger attitude to take up than most men believe. It is, in fact, too strong a line to be palatable to our natural weakness. But if it is the *right* line, we must brace ourselves to take it: the issues at stake are far too serious for self-sparing. And perhaps the Church's share in the great sacrifice is that she should confess to the world, "I have *not* been Christian after all: I, too, must join in the new quest of Christ."

Realizing, then, the greatness of the emergency, how are we to turn it into an opportunity? "Jesus . . . saith to Philip, 'Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?' But this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do." If the first condition of restoration was a sense of our poverty, and the second the hopefulness of faith in God, as the One who can bring good out of evil, then surely a third is a confidence that God has His own plans ready—that our part is only to discover them, and not to think out others of our own. Our trouble in the past has largely arisen through dictating to God, and putting His Holy Spirit in human leading-strings. Now we have learned in so many new ways the weakness and worthlessness of the best-

laid plans of men, that perhaps we shall be more inclined to let God dictate to us instead.

“Here work enough to watch  
The Master work, and catch  
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tools’  
true play.”

And in proportion as we lay ourselves out to play the part of builder only, and let God be His own architect, His plans will grow plain even while we work at them.

“His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.”

“This He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do.”

And what was His plan in the story before us, in that situation so like our own to-day? In the first place, He inquired what resources *were* available; in the second place, He appropriated them *all*; in the third, He produced out of them nothing new or mysterious or unlike what was given Him, but the *same* as it, only in sufficient quantity to meet all the need.



The raw material for the miracle we need wrought for us is only our own human nature as God meant it to be: a thing made in His likeness, and capable of reflecting Him if it lives near enough to Him. The men and women who have best interpreted God to their fellows in the past have, as a rule, been ordinary people, who only became extraordinary through their nearness to God. Their testimony has always been, "It is not in me." Why, then, should there not be more of such people to-day—people who, because they are human in the highest sense, are also interpreters and transmitters of God? It is such people who are our most crying national need at present. Every Christian is meant to be such; every man and woman is capable of becoming such. The one thing needful is to live near enough to God to be perfectly human—that is, cleansed from *self* in all its various forms. It is plain men and women who are willing to do that and be that who are going to save us. Such God can multiply, by the spreading outward of His life from them to others, till the whole need of the world is met.

But the surrender must be without reservation. It is a campaign we are faced with, and the only possible soldier is the man who gives himself *whole*. I doubt if

our Lord would have wrought any miracle on (say) three of the loaves and one of the fishes. The smallness of what a man can bring matters little; what matters is that he should bring it *all*. Even from the point of view of policy, a few complete Christians will be worth more to the Church at present than battalions of the quarter, half, or three-quarter Christians we have too long agreed to pass. Even in our own interests we must reject such a man as was the other day described to me in these terms: "His language in the Mess is perfectly revolting, but I think he is a good Christian at heart." Possibly he is: but not of the kind we need—not of the kind God can take and multiply to feed the hunger of the world. True, the Church is meant to be a hospital as well as an army: but it will be well in future to save our reputation by distinguishing patients from effectives. In war it is only the latter who count.

And then upon the surrender follows the multiplication. The five loaves and two fishes suffice to feed five thousand men, and the emergency passes into the opportunity. How? By the method, so little really believed in, and so narrowly applied, which we call "inspiration," and which means the substitution, by faith, of God's action for our

own. It is the reward of the surrender of self. Instead of my random, puzzled efforts, the calm, direct activity of God ; instead of much anxiety and a minimum of right results, the consciousness that "our sufficiency is of God," and that, because in *all* our ways we do acknowledge Him, He *is* directing our paths. We accept this, of course, up to a certain point : else where is our belief in the Holy Spirit ? But we tend, do we not, to confine His influence to the moral sphere—to look for His help in the inner moral struggle, whereas it is meant to be ours in *everything* that concerns us. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit means nothing less than this : that the genius of God is available to the faith of man ; that I, if I surrender my "self," can become a radiating focus of the life of God ; that, in our Lord's own language, "if ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done for you." A complete Christianity is God's means for propagating spiritual genius. The few loaves and fishes, honestly surrendered, become the food of five thousand men.

Christianity in this sense the world needs, and the world will, in the long run, welcome and honour, though it may possibly try to crucify it first. If such Christianity can be

produced to-day, the emergency will indeed be the opportunity we have so long prayed for. But Christianity only exists in the form of Christians. It is Christians of the right sort that the world is looking for. Have you and I the faith, and the selflessness, to let God use us to meet its need?

## VI

### GOD'S CLAIM ON OUR WEALTH<sup>\*</sup>

"WHAT kind of building," asks Mr. C. F. G. Masterman in his book of six years ago, now more impressive than ever, "The Condition of England,"—"what kind of building will represent for the astonishment of future eyes the harvest of the super-wealth of the British Peace?" And he doubts if there will be any monument worthy of the means available for its erection, because of that smallness of soul in the nation which has combined a reckless and degrading private luxuriousness with "a severe scrutiny of any kind of public expenditure, and a resentful criticism of all attempts to stamp the memory of this age upon enduring brick and stone." Meanwhile the Providence of History has given his question an emphatic

\* A paper contributed to the "Church Congress" number of *The Guardian*, October 1915.

answer. "The British Peace" is at an end; and its harvested super-wealth is rapidly being expended, not in building, but in throwing down.

One hesitates in days when misunderstanding is easy, and wilful misunderstanding none too rare, to make any statement which seems to attribute to our own people any smallest share in responsibility for the war. Yet those who have the candour and patience to think down to first principles will surely find reason for admitting that Louvain, Rheims, and Ypres are among the monuments not only of German "kultur," but of "the super-wealth of the British Peace." It was not, of course, our fault that we were by far the richest nation the world has known, and it was probably to our credit, as well as to our advantage, to have kept the peace, and imposed peace, for so many years. But the chief of commercial nations, and the one which most owed her greatness to commerce, cannot decline all responsibility for the way in which commercial ideals and standards have come to dominate civilization. No one can pretend that commercial motives were not the real impelling force behind that German policy of aggression which has ended in this world-war. No one can deny that, in all the cir-

cumstances, the commercial ambitions of Germany were at least intelligible. They felt they could make a better use of our inheritance than we were making of it, and from that easily went on to believe it was really meant for them. And after the sordid revelations of the state of our own house in the last few months—the decay of conscience throughout the community, to say nothing of the incompetence and waste which are largely its outcome—can we pretend to be surprised or indignant? The war is, for Germany, a cynical but quite reasonable effort to get from us what we have taught the world to regard as the *summum bonum*—unlimited access to wealth. “Hinc illæ lacrimæ.”

Not that this excuses our enemies for first breaking the Tenth Commandment, and then setting up a god of their own—national power—in whose name they could break the other nine according as any of them proved inconvenient. But at least it suggests that the Christians among us must be willing to bear some part of their burden of guilt, “and so fulfil the law of Christ.” If we had not largely owed our position in the world to wealth, and made it our god in return for this advancement, Germany would at least have had less temptation to deify

military power for the same reason. It is nineteenth-century England which imposed the "money standard" on modern civilization. That can scarcely be gainsaid, though the chief centres of money-worship have since shifted to the land of "the almighty dollar." The money standard is the standard measure of materialism, under which the last question about everything is, "What will it command in the market?" Now we are witnessing the *débâcle* of materialism and discovering—some of us—the relative powerlessness of gold. Yet with the horror inspired by the spectacle there mingles some sense of relief. Our god Mammon was becoming a nightmare to many of his votaries, and stifling their souls. If we are honest, let us, along with the relief and the horror, confess to some sense of contrition as well.

It is from this angle of vision that we may well find in the destruction of so much that the spiritual greatness of past ages left to us the most significant monument of the material greatness of the age just closed. And if so, what is to be our attitude to that god of our own making which has thus betrayed us? In facing this question we shall, I think, come somewhere near the root of God's claim on our wealth.



In the familiar story of Gideon's rise to greatness, in Judges vi, there is a significant touch which adds to the symbolic relevance of that whole episode to our circumstances to-day. A national deliverance is needed; a national repentance has begun; and a national leader is being prepared. But first some spectacular blow has to be struck at the sin which wrought all the trouble—the false god whose worship had forfeited for Israel the protection of Jehovah. Gideon is bidden to throw down the altar of Baal in his father's courtyard, cut down the wooden image beside it, and offer a burnt sacrifice to the Lord his God “with the wood of the Asherah which thou shalt cut down.” The very image and symbol of the false god is to become the means of doing sacrifice to the true; and that sacrifice is the first step in the national renaissance.

Need one labour the application? If money has been the recipient of worship due to God alone, it can also be, as it were, the fuel of the sacrifice which will express our contrition, show the reality of our return to Him, and be the effectual means of our emancipation from the hard service of the usurper. For it has been a hard service—is there not a look in the face of the

man who has wealth for his god which tells as much to seeing eyes?—and there is little now to show for it. “All this,” says Dr. Johnson, speaking of riches, “excludes but one evil—poverty.” In these days we know that to be among the least of evils. But the point to remember is that we shall not get rid of the bad tradition unless we deliberately break with it. Otherwise it is simply in abeyance till it can reassert itself—a weed cut down but not uprooted. And this deliberate breach can only be made with saving effect, on behalf of all, by those who can make it, so to speak, conspicuously. Herein lies the great opportunity of wealth.

The call, in one sense, comes to all of us, however small our portion of worldly goods. It is relative, not absolute, wealth that must be considered. What causes the trouble is not that A has £1,000 a year, but that B, with £800, feels it necessary to compete with him; and so on, both up and down the scale. And so there is a call to all of us alike to “be content with such things as *we have*.” The fact that during the war economy has become a national duty, while after the war it will, for most of us, be a sheer necessity, will make the transition to new standards of

living very much easier. But it will not do everything. Unless the old tradition is definitely repudiated, the day will come when thrift will once more pass back into the category of vices, and be called "stinginess" or "shabbiness," and when, because A, whose fortunes are looking up, resumes, one by one, the old trappings and luxuries, B, who cannot really afford them but dares not lag behind, will do the same. And so the insane process of "speeding up" will begin again, with all its attendant swarm of evils; and those who during the war have learned at last that "their citizenship is in heaven" will find themselves once more "laying up for themselves treasures upon the earth." The world will have lost both ways. The lesson will have been paid for—at what a price!—but it will not have been learned.

The remedy lies, surely, in a concerted and conspicuous repudiation of the money standard as the determinant of life, both public and private, and the devotion of the money so saved from the mere apparatus of life to the teaching and illustrating of what life itself means. God's call to wealth is a call not to repudiate money as evil, but to use it only as a means to good. It is not money, but the love of money,

that is "the root of all evil;" and we can, in our Lord's words, "make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." All this is the merest commonplace, I know; but is it not one of the commonplaces which we had to wait for the war to teach us to apply? As was said to me lately, "Think what a time the social reformers might have had, with only a tenth part of the cost of the war at their disposal! Why, all the social problems would have been solved right off—so far as money can solve them!" But we should have rebelled most bitterly against taxation on that scale for the purging and building up of our civilization, while we cheerfully contribute many times as much for the casting of it down. Self-sacrifice in any form has become, for all sorts of unlikely people, a passion—almost a mania. Can we keep this up when it comes to the rebuilding? On the answer to that question the future of our Empire depends.

A very little thought will show the vast needs for consecrated riches in the days ahead. A very little more will suggest that such of us as survive to see the new day after this darkness will not be entitled, and ought not to desire, to return to "comfort." Our lives will have been

bought for us by other lives, far better entitled, in many cases, to survive than we. For their sakes, if for the sake of no higher Sacrifice, made for us long before but re-interpreted to us now, we are morally bound to "consecrate ourselves." If the spirit which nowadays so rightly says that "nothing is too good for those who are fighting for us" is not mere shallow sentiment, it will last on to inspire, and to provide the means for, the work of reconstruction. It is not for us as individuals that they are fighting—which of us could stand it if it were only that?—but for the ideal bound up in the England we belong to and in the view of life—the Christian view of life—which England claims to defend. They will have died in vain unless through their death that ideal is in some measure realized, and the standard of Christ set up again. But that cannot be while any of the idols which have so long usurped His throne remain in possession. To have broken Prussian militarism will be no help to the Kingdom of Christ unless we also smash in the process the English worship of wealth. And besides, our idol is needed for the wood for the new sacrifice to the God of Love.

But here it is only the wealthy who can

effectually lead. The poor will not want to be extravagant when they see the rich sparing. The simplified life we are all glad to live now might well remain as a permanent blessing of the war, through the rich refusing to be tempted back to luxury. Why should not the war-time "low-water mark" of every household's expenses remain its norm for the future, as a matter of conscience, and as a sacrifice to our dead and to the ideal they died for? The amount not only of money but of time and energy thus released would go far to make good what we are losing now, and to make it good in the right way because in the right spirit. To quote Dr. Johnson once more, "The trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth." And it will be an infinitely better and truer "commonwealth" for being set up, not on the plunder, but on the free sacrifice of a "monarchy" which uncrowns itself.

One brief word more, on lines which the last sentence opens up. Mere money can do but little good, and generally does it at the cost of, perhaps, greater harm. But there is a way of rendering money innocuous in its working by making it what it is meant to be—a real sacrament of self-giving :

“Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—  
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me.”

And true self-giving only takes place in the spirit and atmosphere of love. It is here that the religion of Jesus Christ comes in to give a motive for all-embracing love, because we owe Him everything, and we may find Him in all men, so that every opportunity of service to our fellows is a chance of repaying love's debt to Him. Here again the war has been teaching us. Many of us know what it is to find our love for England and our desire to serve her expressing itself in a warming of our hearts towards every man who wears her uniform; not for anything in himself, but because he represents, embodies, and has given himself to the Cause. “The love of England constraineth us,” especially because we believe England to be suffering for the right, and so indirectly suffering with Christ. Can we not make the transition, with St. Paul, to “the love of Christ constraineth us,” and so live—as we have been learning to live for England—“no longer for our own ends, but for His”?

Given that spirit, the motive for generosity will not pass with the war; the joy of giving—so keenly relished by many now

—will become a life-long possession ; our gifts will be given in the right direction and with the fullest effect ; and, because our “self” is given with them, the objects of our charity will be “partakers with us of grace.” There is room for such complete consecration of our substance in the lives of all, however far from being wealthy. But the rich have the privilege of giving the lead and maintaining the new tradition, till, after the orgies of materialism which the war has silenced, the world shall have learned afresh, and learned for ever, that “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he hath.”



## VII

### OUR DUTY BY OUR DEAD<sup>1</sup>

"These all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, did not receive the promise, God having foreseen and arranged some better thing in connection with us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

"Therefore let us also . . . run with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus."—HEB. xi. 39-xii. 2.

HAVE you ever found yourself set dreaming by something, and then wandering off whither the spirit of your dream might carry you, until you seemed to be miles and miles away from the real and the actual; and then, suddenly, while still in the dream, you stumbled across some

<sup>1</sup> A sermon preached in Hertford College Chapel on All Saints' Day, 1914, a week after the first casualties among undergraduate members of the College.

thought which in a moment flashed you back to your real self, with an almost painful reminder of something *waiting to be done*?

That, I think, is rather the experience one goes through in passing from the eleventh to the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, as in this morning's second lesson. The writer of the Epistle has given ten chapters to elaborate argument, leading up to the great truth he specially wants to bring home—the fact that “faith is the secret of true life.” And then, in the famous eleventh chapter, he illustrates his point from the lives of the great men and women of God down the ages, who did live by faith, and “by faith subdued kingdoms . . . out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned aside invasions of aliens.” They were people of extraordinarily different types—Abraham the nomad chief, Moses the Prince of Egypt, Rahab the harlot, Gideon the farmer's lad—but they were all one in this, that they “endured as seeing Him Who is invisible.” “This was the victory that overcame the world, even their *faith*.”

And yet, somehow, they did not get all they wanted and hoped for. “These all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, yet did not receive the promise,

God having foreseen and arranged some better thing in connection with *us*, that apart from us they should not be made perfect." And then comes the sudden turn of thought which flashes us back to the present and the actual: "*Therefore* let us also, seeing that we have massed around us so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight. . . ."

In other words, the lesson of All Saints' Day is a severely practical one. It comes to remind us of all God's servants departed this life in His faith and fear; for do let us remember that "all saints" simply means "all true Christians," since every Christian is "called to be a saint." To confine the term "All Saints" to the people, sometimes mythical, who happen to be enshrined in calendars, is to rob the festival of all real meaning for ourselves. It comes to remind us, I say, of all God's true servants who have gone before, and are now in the light with Him. But it does so, not just to stir up an emotional interest in them, not just to soothe us with the picture of their reward and joy, but to remind us continually that we, too, have the work of a saint to do and the cross of a saint to bear; nay, more, that so long as we shirk our sainthood, we are not only surrendering our own "inheritance with the

saints in light," but helping to keep them out of theirs.

Let me try to explain. Our present circumstances may help us to understand what the text means when it says that God has so arranged that, apart from us, they cannot be made perfect.

We have been watching, for just three months, how thousands of our best—some of them also our dearest—have been giving up everything to go and help forward a cause which we all hold sacred ; and we have seen hundreds of them "counting not their lives dear unto the death." And they have died, "not having received the promise." The issue of the war is still in the balances—they will never see the victory, if God gives it us, and, so far as we know, they can do no more now to help it nearer. But what is the effect of this thought on ourselves, on any of us, that is, with one spark of nobility in us? Surely, an added determination that their service and sacrifice *shall not* have been in vain ; that so far as we, at least, are concerned, the thing shall be seen through, for *their* sakes even more than for our own. Is not that part, at least, of the inner meaning of what so regularly happens—that after a reverse or disaster recruits stream in in far larger numbers? Most of the men so actuated, no

doubt, do not stop to reason why ; but I think they are, subconsciously, following the very reasoning of our text.

“These all . . . received *not* the promise, God having provided some better thing in connection with us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. *Therefore* let us also . . .”

Do you see now what I mean by saying that the true lesson of All Saints’ Day is a severely practical one—an urgent reminder that we, too, are “called to be saints,” with all that sainthood means, and an appeal to a motive which is half gratitude, half common honesty, I mean the feeling that we dare not “betray,” and deprive of what they fought and died for, those who have been along the way of the Cross before us ?

But let us be quite clear what it is that we may keep them out of by slackness, or help them on to by ourselves “running with patience” the same race now “set before *us*.” It is not, in any sense, their personal salvation ; it is not their share in the blessedness of those who “sleep in Jesus,” who have “departed to be with Christ, which is far better.” That, thank God, is made theirs absolutely by the act of Christ in dying for them, and by their own act in accepting what He did as applying to themselves. If

the dying thief was to pass straight to where his sinless Lord was going—" *This day* shalt thou be *with Me* in Paradise"—there can be no question of any interval of probation and possible pain, during which perhaps something we could do might help them on. I know it is what we call a "natural view to take," that there is such an interval: but it is not a Scriptural view, and if we are going to substitute "natural views" for Scriptural views, it is hard to see where we shall end. It is a "natural view," *if* you either do not grasp or will not accept the full meaning of the Atonement; and as such it is exactly parallel to "natural views" which people take nowadays of the Resurrection, through either failing to grasp or refusing to accept its full meaning also. Progress and growth there must surely be, and continue to be always, for that is a condition, even here, of our highest happiness. But to talk of "probation" is to shake the very basis of Christian confidence; to talk of "purging" is to doubt or to mistake the efficacy of the Cross of Christ.

No, we need not worry about either the state or the progress of those who are "with Christ." We *can* go on talking to Him about them—of course we can, and we cannot help it, if we love them still; and if that is all that is meant by "Prayers for the

Dead," I for one have no objection to them, though "Prayer about the Dead" would be a much safer and more accurate expression for what I mean and what I practise. We can, I say, go on talking to Him about them; and, because He knows our hearts and also theirs, and because His love cannot but will what is for the greatest good and happiness of us both, we can even count on their hearing of us through Him, if that is really the best for them. But one thing we may be sure of, namely, that we need not worry about their *salvation*.

What, then, is that which they have *not* received—that which, apart from us, they *cannot* receive, "God having arranged ahead some better thing in connection with us, that they, apart from us, should not be made perfect"?

Once more our present conditions, with death almost the chief fact that faces us daily, will help us to understand. It is true that we comfort ourselves about those who sleep in Christ by saying that we and they are still one :

"One family we dwell in Him,  
One Church above, beneath,  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream of death."

It is true that, in one sense, it is a narrow

stream. But it is also true that it is *impassable*, and that, while it runs there across the landscape, it does cut our true life in twain. While the "one family" is divided, it cannot realize fully its oneness, it cannot be *perfect*. How far from perfect that "narrow stream" can make life on this side of it some of us know. Do we suppose it is different on the other side? Surely not, if there is love there, and memory; and, without love and memory, can we think of personality as really surviving? True, there must be conditions there which take the pain out of memory and out of love. Those who can see life from above would be able to enter into St. Paul's words about "our light affliction which is but for a moment" in a way that we, down amid the affliction, cannot as yet. But it would wrong our own deepest instincts, and be untrue to what little the Bible tells us about the blessed dead, to think of them as either oblivious of, or indifferent to, those left behind on "the other side."

Above all, if they are "in Christ," they cannot be unaware of the passion and pain still continuing in the heart of a God Who "is afflicted in the afflictions of His people," and Whose whole life in this dispensation (I say it in all reverence) is a fight and an



agony. (Do we sometimes stop to think, "If it is true that not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Father, what must these last months be meaning to the heart of God?" It is a thought worth dwelling on now and then.) Surely, surely, if we follow out all that is implied by saying that those who are gone are "with God" and "in God," they must be looking out on us and our conditions with the outlook of the heart of God Himself; with a strong passion, that is, in the midst of all their peace—the passion that finds vent in the cry of the souls under the altar in the sixth chapter of the Revelation, "How long, O Lord, holy and true . . . ?" "And it was said unto them"—the next verse goes on about those same souls of the martyrs—"that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

The thought behind our text is the same, when it says that "they without us may not be made perfect"; and that is why it goes straight on: "*Therefore* let us also, seeing that we have round about us so great a cloud of witnesses, put aside every weight, and the sin which doth most easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is

set before us, looking unto the founder and finisher of our faith, Jesus."

The pictured faces of the old heroes of faith on the walls begin to float in air before us, and become the faces of spectators rising tier on tier above us in the crowded stadium. What we thought a picture-gallery turns out to be the racecourse of the world, and *we* are the runners, and the race is about to begin. And so, as the runner gathers in his thoughts from wandering, and sets himself for the supreme effort, the spectators themselves in their turn begin to melt into a long cloud on either hand, while just *one* figure stands out with startling clearness, as if nothing else existed in the world. In ancient Rome it would be the figure of the presiding magistrate of the games, who gave the signal for the start, and before whose daïs the race would end. For us it is "the founder and finisher of our faith, Jesus,"—for in the Greek the Name is held over dramatically to the end.

Such is the practical lesson of All Saints' Day, and such it has been, year after year, all down the centuries. But has it ever, I wonder, come with fuller force and appropriateness to any generation than it does in this tragic year, 1914, to ourselves?

As a generation, we are faced with a

heavier burden and trial, a far more difficult and responsible task, than any generation before us for hundreds of years. And the worst of it is that we shall have to work at this task short-handed. Some of the very best of those who were to have been builders are being laid to rest, as it were, among the foundations. Those of us who remain will have to work with the heavy handicap of clouded hearts, and with much of the light gone out of the sky. If there is one thing more than another we shall need, it is vision and inspiration.

And I think we have it here : first in the thought of our responsibility towards the dead, and then in the thought of Christ, "the founder and finisher of our faith," at once the starter of our race and its goal.

"They without us may not be made perfect." They will have died in vain unless we, who profit by their sacrifice, undertake to see to it that the new age which their sacrifice makes possible is worth the price which is being paid. If it is going really to bring nearer all that we hope for when we pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth," then it will have been well worth while. But if it is merely going to lead to another comfortable and easy-going period, with a sluggish conscience

and mean ideals—another period in which personal ambition will once more determine what each shall do, and money and power be the one standard by which to judge his success in doing it—then not only will the whole thing have failed most miserably, whatever be the issue of the fight, but we, the generation which lets it be so, shall be guilty of the blood of these just persons. We cannot allow men to fight and to die for us and for our children unless *we* are prepared to face life in the same spirit of complete self-denial in which they are facing death.

“*Therefore* let us also, seeing that we have round about us so great a cloud of witnesses”—far greater now than it was when the words were first written—“lay aside every weight.” That is the first thing—renunciation. There are many things which are certainly not wrong in themselves, but which are nevertheless sure to be in the way if you are out for serious business. It is not wrong to run a race in an overcoat; but it is extremely bad policy if you really want to win. “No man serving on a campaign,” says St. Paul, “entangles himself in worldly business, that he may satisfy him who chose him to be a soldier.” In other words, it might be very nice to keep up your

ordinary interests and indulgences while you are in a training camp or in the trenches, but the conditions of service simply do not allow of it, and everything else has to yield to them.

Renunciation, then, is the first thing, and it is really the second also, for the purity which is essential for true service and saint-hood is only possible by renunciation, sometimes of the fiercest and bitterest kind. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so *easily gets round us*"—a word found nowhere else, but suggesting the way in which the weeds in a foul pond will get round the legs of the swimmer and drag him down. It is a strong simile, but probably some of us know enough about "besetting sin" to admit that it is not an exaggerated one. If so, there is but one course for us if we want to serve—we must *cut ourselves clear*.

And the third necessity is also, in a sense, renunciation over again: "let us run with *patience* the race that is set before us." For is not patience really another name for *going on*, holding oneself down, refusing to give in to all the plentiful excuses which poor human nature supplies for "giving up trying," for "falling out" of the race?

But the last of the four "things needful"

is no longer negative. It is the positive which explains all the negatives, the absolute devotion which explains the absolute renunciation of everything else—"looking away from all else unto Him who both starts and perfects our faith, Jesus." That is where the inspiration is to come from, which alone will account for and keep possible so much renunciation and patience. Our success in the race and the battle of life will be in proportion to our concentration on Him. For the earthly runner to let his eye, or even his thoughts, wander for a moment from the goal, is to lose momentum, and, maybe, to lose the prize. Our goal is Christ; but in this race wonderful things happen, and somehow we also find Him running by our side, nay, even as it were running *in* us, and by His Spirit keeping our vague attention fixed on Himself as the goal ahead, if only we will look up and meet His eye.

"Therefore," remembering the great cloud of witnesses looking eagerly to us to carry on their work and see that their sacrifice is not in vain—"therefore let *us* also lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus."

## EPILOGUE

### "TILL THE BOYS COME HOME"

"Keep the home-fires burning,  
While your hearts are yearning."

THE words are hackneyed now—the penalty of deserved popularity. But they were quite new to me when, one night in April 1915, I heard them sung by some thousand voices of men in khaki in a new and handsome Y.M.C.A. Hut in the Base Camp at Rouen. It was the first time the Hut was used: it was being opened with a concert by one of those "London Concert Parties" whose periodical visits are so much appreciated "over there." Before the concert we joined—officers and men, chaplains, sisters and doctors from the adjacent camp hospitals, artistes from home and Y.M.C.A. workers—in a little opening service, in which the visiting *padre* in black was allowed to take the Prayer of Dedication. Two memories of that evening will never leave me. One was the singing of "O God our help in

ages past"; the other the haunting swing of the chorus I have just quoted:

"Keep the home-fires burning,  
While your hearts are yearning;  
Though your lads are far away, they dream of home.  
There's a silver lining,  
Through the dark cloud shining—  
Turn the dark cloud inside out, till the Boys come  
home."

It was, somehow, the culminating experience which seemed to sum up a memorable month. The pathos of it all was almost overpowering: it would have been unbearable had one known then that the Germans were about to launch their second fierce attack towards Calais, and that within a week most of that evening's khaki chorus would be choking amid the poison-gas on the salient at Ypres.

I mention the song and the impression it made because it was probably still colouring my own subconsciousness when, four nights later, I gave a lecture in the same Hut to about 250-300 of the same men—mostly Territorials, and of that splendid "early crop"—on the lessons of the war with regard to the future. The lecture in turn I mention because from an experiment tried at the end of it has sprung an effort, now more or less organized, to make definite



preparation for "The Fight for the Future." There is no need to indicate the line taken in the lecture: it was much the same as underlies this little book—an effort to show that Christ's law of life still stands undefeated, but as yet untried on any worthy scale, and that only in a return to principles, the neglect of which has wrecked the present, can we face the future with any hope. A passing inspiration suggested as a sort of parable the spectacle, already alluded to in Chapter III, of "The Cross erect among the Ruins," which (as one knew from many talks in hospitals and elsewhere) had deeply impressed the men who had seen it. I had hardly mentioned it when, from all over the room, came a chorus of "Yes, sir, we've seen that!" "Well, then," I asked them, and took my cue to end on that responsive note, "do you see now what it means, and are you prepared to act upon its meaning?" And then, with some misgivings, I called for "hands up" from those who, agreeing with what had been said, would be willing to make some simple promise that, if God spared them to return home, they would try with His help to act accordingly. There was, of course, a little hesitation at first; but some good friends of mine about the middle of the hall—one of whom had

claimed to be an agnostic when we first met a fortnight before—shot up their hands, and others quickly followed suit, till about half the audience had one hand in the air. I told them to give me their names, and I would see about embodying the promise in a card and sending it to them, and would also try whether anything could be done in England to make it easier for such a promise to be kept “when the Boys come home.”

Many of those who joined in that promise were drafted off in hot haste that night or the next morning to meet the new danger in the North, which had begun the day before; and so their names never reached me. The rest—some of whom, alas, were killed before their cards could be sent out to them—became the “foundation members” of what is now “THE LEAGUE OF THE SPIRITUAL WAR.” Its central object is to conserve the spiritual results and bring home more widely the spiritual lessons of this present time: and this little book may be said to be, in a way, an exposition of its principles. Its work follows three main lines of effort: to bring home to our fighting men that same meaning of “The Cross erect among the Ruins,” which is the device of the League, and add their names to the roll of mem-

bers ; to keep in touch during the war with those so enrolled ; and meanwhile to “ keep the home-fires burning ”—or kindle them where they have gone out or have never been lit—so that, in the words of the League’s official statement, “ the faith of the men who return may be not hindered but helped ” by what they find awaiting them.

The movement, which has the official approval and interest of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderators of the two Scottish Presbyterian Churches, while the Heads of the Church of Ireland and the Scottish Episcopal Church have expressed their cordial sympathy, is ambitious in scope but not in organization. Its policy is to use existing machinery rather than create new. It seeks merely to set before all Christian people and forces and institutions at home, in so far as it is given opportunity, the high duty and importance of setting our house in order, morally and spiritually, against the day when “ the Boys come home ” ; and meanwhile it tries to gather the names of those of “ the Boys ” whose hearts God has been touching through their strange experiences, and who by nearness to death have learned afresh the purpose of life, and to prepare them on their part to return in the right spirit, and

go on so living, for the sake of their country and for the sake of those who will return no more.

It is an ambitious programme : one which could not even be faced apart from faith in God, and which cannot be carried out without man's co-operation with God on the largest scale and in the most downright manner. But at least it is a programme in which, without any special machinery, every man and woman who reads these words can do his or her "bit."

In the first place, it embraces all the Churches : not as an "undenominational effort," but as one which, believing in definiteness but not in mutual condemnation, seeks to make each of its members a better and more practical member of his own religious body. Each name on the register will, it is hoped, be handed over at the end of the war to some one representing the owner's denomination in his own locality. With Canon Scott Holland as Chairman of the Committee, and so distinguished a leader of Nonconformity as Dr. Selbie as its Vice-Chairman, those who love definiteness and those who love tolerance can alike feel secure.

But, even more important, it is a work which needs and asks for the help of every

man and woman, of whatever Church, who believes in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and who agrees with what the foregoing pages have tried to establish, that only a return to the principles of Christ can save the future and remedy the past. A national conversion can only come about through the conversion of individuals: and here it is the influence of individuals, not organizations, that tells. THE LEAGUE OF THE SPIRITUAL WAR appeals for, and depends on the formation of, a spiritual "New Army" to ensure the right issue to the Fight for the Future: men and women all over the country who, united only by their common devotion to and faith in God, and inspired by that higher patriotism which "seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," will, each in his own sphere of influence, large or small, uphold the banner and the cause of Christ. We have to make men see that, as by forsaking the Spirit of the Cross in the past we have come to this calamity, so by returning and submitting once more to it we may, with God, bring good out of evil and make even the wrath of man turn to God's praise.

In this wider, underlying part of the task there are many others working beside us,

and welcoming mutual sympathy and help: for in such a struggle and at such a time there cannot be too large forces in the field, and in any cause which names the Name of Christ there cannot even be room for jealousy. In particular, the Church of England Men's Society is backing our effort in the warmest way, and we are in constant touch with the "Laymen's Christian Crusade," originating from the Cavendish Association, which should do so much to create the right atmosphere in which to face the dangers and opportunities of Peace. Meanwhile it is primarily the returning soldiers who are the concern of the "L. S. W.," though anything which in any way "keeps the home-fires burning till the Boys come home" is a real contribution to its work.

How each may help, in his own place and measure, the seven chapters of this book in their order may suggest. There is work to be done by cultivating in ourselves, and stimulating in others, a true sense of how we are seen by God, and the penitence which such a view must excite; by thinking out and persuading ourselves and others of the way in which the war has vindicated Christ; by boldly sharing our spiritual knowledge, and spreading the faith by which we live; by seeking afresh to learn the

secret and live in the atmosphere of Prayer ; by consecrating to the purposes of God first ourselves, and then our substance, be it great or small ; and by that renunciation of the world and concentration upon Christ which are, after all, but the common obligation of all baptized persons, but which have not hitherto been conspicuous features of most professedly Christian lives. Three new dominant motives may inspire us now, if the great original motive has failed to stir our blood in the past. We shall be doing and giving and suffering for the highest future good of our own country and of the world ; for the happiness of the men who are now fighting our battles, and who look to see us more worthy of their sacrifice when, in God's mercy, they return to homes which absence has re-consecrated for them ; and for the honour of our dead and of all the great sacred things they died for, that their supreme sacrifice may not have been in vain.

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TEACH us, good Lord, to serve Thee as Thou deservest : to give, and not to count the cost ; to fight, and not to heed the wounds ; to toil, and not to seek for rest ; to labour, and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do Thy will : through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(Ignatius Loyola.)*

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**The League of the Spiritual War,** referred to in the Epilogue, is an effort to call attention, both at home and among the troops on Active Service, to the spiritual meaning and lessons of the present time, and to the great importance of applying them both to personal and to national life in the difficult years of reconstruction ahead. Its members are officers and men in the King's Forces who "mean, if God spares them, to fight on His side in that second campaign, and would like to help and be helped by one another." Further information will gladly be sent, on receipt of stamp for reply, by

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